CLAIMS

1. Method for the automatic configuration of a computer peripheral for processing a computer document, said computer document being segmented into a plurality of unitary subparts for processing by said peripheral, said subparts being processed sequentially by said peripheral in a preconfigured order of processing, said method comprising the following steps:

- acquiring so-called context data relating to a processing context of said computer document, said processing context being defined by the content of said subparts and/or by the operating characteristics of said computer peripheral;

- testing said context data in order to determine the validity of at least one predetermined condition relating to said context data;

- modifying said pre-configured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document, said modification step being implemented if said at least one predetermined condition is determined as being valid, in order thus to adapt, in a manner appropriate to said processing context, the order of processing of the subparts of the computer document by the computer peripheral.

2. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 1, in which said processing of said computer document includes a step of generating the orders necessary to said processing and a step of translating said orders by means of a driver for said computer peripheral, said method being characterised in that it includes, prior to said step of acquiring the context data, the following steps:

- temporarily storing said orders grouped together by subparts of said computer document, thus forming a plurality of groups of stored orders, each group being associated with an access data item affording memory access to said group by the driver; and

- temporarily storing said access data associated with said groups of orders, said access data being stored in a predetermined order, said

predetermined order conditioning the preconfigured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document by the peripheral;

said method also being characterised in that said step of modifying the preconfigured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document is effected by modifying said predetermined order of said stored access data.

3. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 2, wherein each of said groups of orders is stored in a file of a first type.

4. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 2 or 3, wherein said access data are stored in a file of a second type in the form of an ordered list.

5. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 3 ~~or 4,~~ wherein said access data consist of access paths to said files of a first type.

6. Automatic configuration method according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ any of claims 1 to 3, wherein said context data comprise data relating to at least one functional characteristic of said computer peripheral, by means of which, when the associated predetermined condition is satisfied, said subparts of said computer document are ordered at the end of the processing in a reverse order compared with the said preconfigured processing order; and in that said step of modifying the preconfigured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document is accomplished by reversing said predetermined order of said stored access data.

7. Automatic configuration method according to any one of Claims 2 to ~~6~~ 3, wherein said context data comprise data indicative of the type of content of said subparts of said computer document, and in that said step of modifying the preconfigured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document is accomplished by the grouping together of said access data stored as a function of the type of orders contained in the corresponding stored group of orders, so that the subparts of the computer document whose content is faster to process by means of said computer peripheral are processed before the subparts whose content is slower to process.

8. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 7 when it is dependent on Claim 4, wherein said grouping together of said stored access

data is effected by the creation of sub-lists in said ordered list contained in said file of a second type.

A 9. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 7 ~~or 8,~~ wherein said step of acquiring data is preceded by a step of analysing the content of said subparts of said computer document, so as to obtain said context data relating to the content of the said computer document.

10. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 9, wherein said step of analysing the content of said subparts of said computer document is implemented by the analysis of the orders contained in said groups of stored orders associated with said subparts of the computer document.

A 11. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 9 ~~or 10,~~ wherein the temporary storage step is adapted to store graphical orders and the analysis step includes the following substeps:

- seeking the existence or not of open graphical functions;
- seeking the existence of not of closed graphical functions;
- seeking the existence or not of bitmap mode representations; and
- seeking the existence or not of text functions.

12. Method for the automatic configuration of a computer peripheral for processing a computer document, said computer document being segmented into a plurality of unitary subparts for processing by said peripheral, said subparts being processed sequentially by said peripheral in a pre-configured order of processing, said method comprising the following steps:

- acquiring so-called context data relating to the type of information contained in said unitary subparts, said context data defining a processing context ;

- testing said context data in order to determine the validity of at least one predetermined condition relating to said context data;

- modifying said pre-configured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document, said modification step being implemented if said at least one predetermined condition is determined as being valid, in order thus to adapt, in a manner appropriate to the processing context, the order of processing of the subparts of the computer document by the computer peripheral.

13. Automatic configuration method according to Claim 12, wherein the type of information contained in said unitary subparts, is text, image, or graphics, or a combination thereof.

14. Device for the automatic configuration of a computer peripheral for processing a computer document, said computer document being segmented into a plurality of unitary subparts for processing by said peripheral, said subparts being processed sequentially by said peripheral in a pre-configured order of processing, said device comprising:

- means of acquiring so-called context data relating to a processing context of said computer document, said processing context being defined by the content of said subparts and/or by the operating characteristics of said computer peripheral;

- means of testing said context data in order to determine the validity of at least one predetermined condition relating to said context data;

- means of modifying said preconfigured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document, said modification step being implemented if said at least one predetermined condition is determined as being valid, in order thus to adapt, in a manner appropriate to said processing context, the order of processing of the subparts of the computer document by the computer peripheral.

15. Automatic configuration device according to Claim 13, wherein the means of acquiring context data include:

- means of analysing the content of said subparts of said computer document; and

- means of acquiring operating characteristics of said computer peripheral.

16. Automatic configuration device according to Claim 14 or 15, wherein said processing includes a step of generating the orders necessary to said processing and a step of translating said orders by means of a driver for the said computer peripheral, said device comprising:

- means of temporarily storing said orders, said orders being grouped together by subpart of said computer document, thus forming a

plurality of groups of stored orders, each group being associated with an access data item affording memory access to said group by the driver; and

- means of temporarily storing said access data associated with said groups of orders, said means being adapted to store said access data in a predetermined order, said predetermined order conditioning the preconfigured order of processing of the subparts of the computer document by the peripheral.

17. Automatic configuration device according to Claim 16, wherein the temporary storage means are intended to store graphical orders and the means of analysing the content of the subparts of the computer document are adapted to seek the existence or otherwise of open graphical functions, closed graphical functions, point mode representations and text functions.

18. Automatic configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 17~~ or 15, incorporated into a microprocessor, a read only memory being adapted to store a program for automatically configuring a peripheral for processing a computer document, and a random access memory containing registers for storing the variables modified during the running of said program.

19. Automatic configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 18~~ or 15, wherein the processing peripheral is a printer.

20. Automatic configuration device according to one of Claims 14 ~~to 18~~ or 15, wherein the processing peripheral is a facsimile machine.

21. Computer comprising means adapted to implement an automatic configuration method according to any one of Claims 1 to ~~13~~ 3.

22. Computer comprising an automatic configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 20~~ or 15.

23. Computer communication network, including at least one computer and a peripheral for processing a computer document connected to said computer via the network, said computer comprising a configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 20~~ or 15.

24. Computer communication network, including at least one computer and a peripheral for processing a computer document connected to said computer via the network, said computer comprising a configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 20~~ or 15.

25. System for acquiring data forming a computer document, said system comprising means adapted to implement an automatic configuration method according to any one of Claims 1 ~~to 13.~~ to 3

26. System for acquiring data forming a computer document, said system comprising a configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 20.~~ or 15

27. Printer comprising means adapted to implement an automatic configuration method according to any one of Claims 1 ~~to 13.~~ to 3

28. Printer comprising a configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 20~~. or 15

29. Facsimile machine comprising means adapted to implement an automatic configuration method according to any one of Claims 1 ~~to 13.~~ to 3

30. Facsimile machine comprising a configuration device according to any one of Claims 14 ~~to 20.~~ or 15

31. A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising computer readable program means for causing a computer to perform an automatic configuration method according to any one of Claims 1 ~~to 13.~~ or 15